Student loan limits, interest rates raised

By Stuart Gitlow
Higher student loan interest rates and increased debt ceilings are the direct result of the Education Amendments of 1980 bill, signed into law by President Carter last week. The increases, "provisions for increased overall funding are not very good," according to MIT Dean of Student Financial Aid, Leonard Gallagher.

A limit of $50 billion of federal funds has been allotted to post-secondary education through 1985, according to the amendment. The bill, in addition to reauthorizing existing procedures included in the Higher Education Act, establishes the new loan policies.

During the signing ceremony for the documents, Carter proclaimed that the bill "provides support to students in all kinds of institutions... private institutions as well."

Although National Direct Student Loan (NDSL) limits have been raised from $5000 to $6000 (for all undergraduate years), the interest rate for new borrowers has been increased from three to four percent over a six-month period. The "current 9% to 12-month grace period would be reduced to a minimum of six months for all students beginning repayments," according to the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

France, where the latest outbreak of violence has been directed against the Jewish community, public opinion polls give some voice of the French feelings towards neo-fascism. A Louis Harris survey made in France after the Rue Copernic synagogue bombing on October 3 shows that 52 percent of Frenchmen polled felt that anti-Semitism was a widespread problem. Forty-four percent said that the President of France, Valery Giscard d'Estaing, had failed in his attempt to prevent terrorist outbreaks. Italy is the country most devastated by terrorist violence, both fascist and in addition to the Bologna railroad station bombing in August, which killed 84 and injured 180, there have been killings aimed at eliminating opposition to neo-fascist causes. Berger stated that a judge in Rome was murdered recently by neo-fascists, and Calvi was killed in 1975, but most attacks remain unproven.

In the particular case of bombings spot light neo-fascists

By David Lindberg
Recent bombings in Germany, France, and Italy have focused attention on the neo-fascist movement which has gained notoriety in Europe over the past several years. Professor Suzanne Berger of the Political Science Department, a Guggenheim Fellow in Europe over the past several years, has been influencing the internal political process in the Western European nations.

Stressing the dissolution between rightist movements and rightist organizations in Europe and other rightist movements in the world today, Berger pointed out that the European fascist groups do not seem to be connected with the religious community, nor are they fundamentally religious in nature. Unlike Khomeini's Islamic fundamentalist movement or Libya's Muammar Qaddafi's Islamic political party, their organizations do not seem to enjoy the support of the people, Berger said.

Most governments in Western Europe permit the formation of extreme right-wing political parties. In the case of Italy, Berger said, one party, the Movimento Sociale Italiano (Italian Social Movement), has had success in getting deputies elected to parliament. However, they must not have lived with their parents for more than three years, and they must not have been married. These requirements must all be met for the prior year and the current year for the student to be eligible.

When asked if he thought the increased NDSL limits would affect MIT students, Gallagher was pessimistic. "The NDSL loans are based on an application from each university. There is competition among colleges for applicants. The limit change and don't mean we'll get more money from the federal government."

The Guaranteed Student Loan Program (GSL) has been restructured to allow parents a longer period of time in which to repay loans. This new program allows parents to borrow up to $3000 annually, up from $2500, towards a total of $15,000 on behalf of their dependent children. Loan repayment may begin within sixty days of graduation. Meanwhile, under the old program, independent students may borrow $3000 annually with interest rates being raised from seven to nine percent for new borrowers.

Student participants in this year's GSL will not pay the new higher interest rate.

"Independent students," according to Gallagher, "must meet three requirements; they must be listed as tax-dependent's, have parental support of less than $6000, and must not have lived with their parents for more than three years. All three requirements must be met for the prior year and the current year for the student to be eligible."

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